What's Cookin' at Bethesda Cookbook Club

Bethesda Public Library

Adults

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Byline

Susan Fisher, Branch Manager, Bethesda Public Library, Thompson Station, Tenn.

What's Cookin' at Bethesda is a club that meets monthly and features the recipes of a particular cookbook author whose titles are owned by the library. Participants each bring a different dish that they've prepared using this author's recipe, and everyone shares in a Thursday night dinner.

Advanced Planning

My goal was to attract more adults to a library program. Staff and I began planning how the program would work about three months prior to our first meeting.

Marketing

This is always the biggest issue for us. We began promoting this program the month before it began. It was featured in our monthly newsletter, on our Facebook page, and on Twitter. We also had a slide on our webpage and on a slideshow on our flatscreen TV in the children's area. Word of mouth was extremely important, too. Staff promoted it to every patron that came in for a month before our first meeting. I actually think the word of mouth promotion was the most successful of all.

Budgeting

This is a very low-cost program, but we needed to buy napkins, plates and cutlery. We already had some tablecloths here that we had purchased for another program. For the first meeting, we bought iced tea and ice, but now a different club member is responsible for this each month.

Day-of-event Activity

We prepared tables with tablecloths and some flowers that we happened to have at the library. We cleared the top of a low bookshelf to serve as a counter for the food. We used an empty book cart for the drinks and ice. We didn't need any extra staff to prepare on the day of the event.

Program Execution

After we eat, we go around to each member and have them describe their experience with the recipe; such as, would they make it again, did they find it

difficult, were they able to find all the ingredients or did they have to substitute, etc.

We had nine people at our first meeting, which we considered a success for our small library. Since then, our numbers have been steadily growing, up to fifteen at the last meeting. This has prompted us to discuss having a Saturday lunch meeting as well as our initial Thursday night meeting, which may bring some people who don't drive at night. Everyone who comes has loved the program and they can't wait until the next meeting. We have met and exceeded our original goals for the program.

Advice

I would encourage any library to try this program. People love to try new cookbooks, but with the cookbook club, they are able to try many more recipes than they would on their own.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

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Nov 19, 2015
Adults (21 and up)+ | $
Image



Cookbook Challenge

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)
Nov 19, 2015
Adults (21 and up)+ | $$$
Image



Gather around the Table

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Feb 1, 2016
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'Downton Abbey' Viewing and Tea

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)